



Trainee Skills

Office of Training and Diversity
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

The relationship between a mentor and trainee requires active participation by both parties. By taking an active role, you can enhance your training experiences at the National Institutes of Health. Ultimately, it is up to you, the trainee, to tailor your training to meet your career goals.

Communication

- Arrange meetings with your mentor individually and also as part of the group.
- Initiate discussions with other trainees and laboratory staff.
- Inquire about available resources such as:
 - Individuals with complementary knowledge and expertise
 - Core facilities, including Research Technologies Branch services
 - Human resource support and availability.

Research/Skills Development

- Initiate opportunities for increasing dependence.
- Review and follow guidelines for best practices.
- Work with your mentor to select an appropriate project.
- Help plan, identify, and prioritize projects based on short- and long-term goals.
- Seek opportunities to learn about new research techniques, ways to keep records, methods of analysis, and skills for interpretation of data.

Promotion

- Follow up on opportunities for successful collaborations.
- Attend seminars, forums, and professional meetings.
- Make presentations at meetings.
- Seek opportunities to gain experience and to advance.
- Be willing to ask questions and seek help.

Career Advice/Assistance

- Seek input regarding education and career development.
- Ask for time for education and career development activities (e.g., interviews).
- Take advantage of career contacts and networking opportunities.
- Review position ads on a regular basis.

Evaluation/Review of Work

- Establish goals and objectives with your mentor at the onset.
- Maintain open communication with your mentor.
- Use feedback as a monitor of your progress and make appropriate changes as necessary.
- Obtain feedback from other laboratory staff.
- Create an Individual Development Plan.
- Visit <http://hr.od.nih.gov/worklife/career/idp.htm> for additional information.

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